

DRAFT MINUTES

ROLL CALL: Diane Leja, Martha Muellenberg (left at 12.00pm), Greg Redlin, Gabrielle Strouse, Katy Beem

ABSENT: Kelsey Collier-Wise

OTHERS PRESENT: Daniel Burniston

On a motion by Muellenberg, seconded by Redlin, the minutes of the January 17, 2019 meeting were approved. All present voted aye.

On a motion by Muellenberg, seconded by Redlin, the agenda was approved. All present voted aye.

There were no visitors present to be heard.

On a motion by Redlin, seconded by Muellenberg, the reports of the director were accepted. All present voted aye.

On a motion by Redlin, seconded by Beem, the January expenditures were approved. All present voted aye.

REPORTS:

Kozak Room Door – The Library Director reported that the City Street Department worked on the locking mechanism for the outside Kozak Room Door as the locking mechanism was not working correctly at times. As part of the process they added a handle to the outside of the door, so it can be opened from the outside. The lock will be changed out for a separate core that does not open any other doors in the library. These changes should allow a key to be checked out so that the door can be used for afterhours room reservations.

Quarterly Training Report – The Library Director reported that Martha Muellenberg kindly came and did a workshop titled “Connecting to Young Readers Through Self-Reflection and Action.” Martha’s workshop covered effective strategies for engaging with and correcting the behavior of younger patrons. Staff members reflected on their strengths and weaknesses, types of compliance and discipline, the importance of connecting and communicating with younger patrons, and classroom management. Feedback from library staff was positive and that the presentation was helpful.

Foundation – It is anticipated that a meeting date will be set for the near future for the annual Library Foundation meeting.

Friends – The Friends reported another great used book sale in February with \$687.50 raised. The Library Director reported the Friends are supporting the purchase of a new book club bag for the title “Becoming” by Michelle Obama. This title has been extremely popular with a waiting list for our three current copies in addition to the request for a book club bag.

On a motion by Leja, seconded by Redlin, the decision was made to send flowers to Youth Services Librarian Beth Samenus while she is out for approximately six weeks recovering from surgery. All present voted aye.

OLD BUSINESS:

There was no old business to be reviewed.

NEW BUSINESS:

Review of Unattended Children's Policy and Patron Code of Conduct

In response to a patron complaint that was received in January the Library Board reviewed the Unattended Children's Policy and the Patron Code of Conduct. The Library Director provided an introduction and background on the policy including that it was in November 2017 that a new Patron Code of Conduct and Unattended Children's Policy was approved by the Library Board.

The purpose of the Library Patron Code of Conduct is to maintain a safe and pleasant environment for all library patrons. It also ensures access to library facilities, the safety of users and staff, and the protection of the library collection, equipment and facility.

The purpose of the unattended children's policy is firstly to help ensure the safety of minors using the library, but also for protection of the library collection, equipment and facility.

These two policies combined were implemented to help give library staff a clear policy and a tool to refer to when dealing with disruptive patrons in the library.

Both Policies were only recently implemented. Both policies were thoroughly researched, discussed and reviewed by the library board prior to approval.

The policies are comparable to those used by other libraries in South Dakota and across the country. The policies were designed to provide staff with a framework for dealing with disruptive patrons, while also recognizing that every disruptive incident is different, and some flexibility is needed when addressing incidents. No inequalities in discipline could be identified.

The library incident communication log is a tool to enable different staff to see what has been going on. With the large number of hours the library is open during a week, and the variety of staff schedules, this tool allows information sharing and adds a level of consistency and awareness for staff members.

The specific incident the patron referred to during the January meeting took place outside the Library but still on city property in close proximity to the library. Also, the parties involved were in the library immediately before the incident, took the materials used in the incident from the library, and returned into the library after the incident.

No other written complaints about the Patron Code of Conduct and Unattended Children's Policy have been received. No other concerns about the Patron Code of Conduct and Unattended Children's Policy have been expressed to the library board since their implementation.

The Library Board discussed the policies and concerns of the patron. On a motion by Redlin, seconded by Muellenberg, the recommendation of the Library Director not to make any revisions to the policy at this time was accepted. All present voted aye.

Patron Complaint – Internet Use Policy and Filtering

The Library Director reported on a patron complaint regarding the Internet Use Policy and filtering. The Library Director provided an introduction and background on the topic.

State Law regarding internet use and filtering policies varies widely. Some federal programs have specific requirements for internet use and filtering policies as a requirement of participation in a program.

South Dakota Law Requires public libraries to adopt a local policy to restrict minors from computer access to obscene materials.

22-24-56. Public libraries to restrict access to obscene materials on public access computers. Any public library that provides a public access computer shall develop and implement, by January 1, 2001, a local policy that establishes measures to restrict minors from computer access to obscene materials.

The Library's current Internet Use Policy was approved on 5/1/2014 and updated on 11/16/2017. The Internet Use Policy specifically prohibits "sending, receiving, printing, or displaying text or graphics that may reasonably be construed as obscene." The policy is available on the Library Website, is posted on the wall in the Technology Center and Youth Room and is displayed on the library's public access computers before allowing a patron access to a computer.

Additionally, when parents/guardians sign a minor up for a library card they are asked to complete an "Internet Access Contract for Minor" making them aware of our policy. Parents/guardians can opt to not to allow their minor child to have access to a computer.

The library director provided a selection of resources from the American Library Association and other sources that consider the issue of filtering in public libraries.

The Library Director noted that the Internet has revolutionized the functions and operations of libraries and schools and expanded exponentially both the opportunities and challenges these institutions face in serving their users.

The patron complaint highlighted valid concerns regarding possible uses of the internet.

Access to pornography is not unrestricted, it is prohibited per the Internet Use Policy.

The library has rarely experienced problems with patrons accessing pornographic content.

In the instance access to pornographic content does become a concern the library's Internet Use Policy and Patron Code of Conduct provides tools necessary to address the issue.

The Library's Internet Use Policy has only recently been updated. The policies were thoroughly researched, discussed and reviewed by the library board prior to approval.

It can be argued that the size of Vermillion Public Library and the setup of public access computers means filtering would not be cost effective and is unnecessary. Youth Room computers were specifically set up to face the circulation desk so they can be easily monitored. The Technology center has glass windows for easy vision within the room.

The Internet use policy is comparable to those used by other libraries in South Dakota and across the country.

No other written complaints about the Internet Use Policy have been received. No other concerns about the Internet Use Policy have been expressed to the library since their implementation.

The Library Board discussed the benefits and challenges associated with internet use and internet filtering. Discussion included the fact that internet filtering is minimally effective at best. Filtering simultaneously fails to effectively protect children while limiting the access rights of all library users. Filtering can irresponsibly provide parents a false sense of security and complacency.

The discussion also covered the following arguments made by American Library Association Resources on the topic of Filtering (<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/filtering>):

- Digital resources provide unprecedented opportunities to expand the scope of information available to users. Libraries and librarians should provide access to information presenting all points of view. The provision of access does not imply sponsorship or endorsement. These principles pertain to digital resources as much as they do to the more traditional sources of information in libraries

- Instances of inappropriate use of such academic tools should be addressed as individual behavior issues, not as justification for restricting or banning access to interactive technology.

- Users have the right to be free of unreasonable limitations or conditions set by libraries, librarians, system administrators, vendors, network service providers, or others.
- Laws prohibiting the production or distribution of child pornography and obscenity apply to the Internet. These laws provide protection for libraries and their users.
- Digital information, services, and networks provided directly or indirectly by the library should be equally, readily, and equitably accessible to all library users.
- Libraries and librarians should not deny or limit access to digital information because of its allegedly controversial content or because of a librarian's personal beliefs or fear of confrontation.
- Rather than filtering access school and library professionals should work closely with young people to help them learn skills and attitudes that will prepare them to be responsible, effective and productive communicators in a free society.
- If a library uses a technological measure that blocks access to information, it should be set at the least restrictive level in order to minimize the blocking of constitutionally protected speech. Adults retain the right to access all constitutionally protected information and to ask for the technological measure to be disabled in a timely manner.
- Libraries are places of inclusion rather than exclusion. Current blocking/filtering software not only prevents access to what some may consider "objectionable" material, but also blocks information protected by the First Amendment. The result is that legal and useful material will inevitably be blocked.
- Parents and legal guardians who are concerned about their children's use of digital resources should provide guidance to their own children.
- Parents and only parents have the right and responsibility to restrict their own children's access—and only their own children's access—to library resources, including the Internet. Librarians do not serve in loco parentis.

The Library Board acknowledged that balancing protecting minor patrons using the internet while also avoiding censorship, invasions of privacy and inadvertently blocking access to multiple legitimate websites is an ongoing challenge faced by libraries and other institutions across the county.

The Library Board agreed that the policies currently in place are effective in prohibiting the viewing of pornographic content in the library, and provides library staff with the tools needed to address instances of the policy being violated. There were no motions for any revisions to the Internet Use Policy at this time, no further action was taken.

FY18 Public Library Survey / Library Annual Report

The Library Director reported that South Dakota Codified Law 14-2-40 required that public libraries "Prepare and submit an annual report to its governing body and to the South Dakota State Library on such forms as may be provided by the State Library."

The Library Director presented the draft of the library's annual report for review. The Library Director reported that there were no dramatic or concerning changes while also highlighting that:

- a. Annual total attendance in library up from 76,586 in 2017 to 104,505 in 2018 – up 36%
- b. Total Physical Circulation up from 72,752 in 2017 to 86,755 – 19%
- c. Total Collection Use (physical and electronic) up from 85075 in 2017 to 100,682 in 2018 – 18%

On a motion by Redlin, seconded by Strouse, the library's annual report was approved. All present voted aye.

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, March 22nd, 2019 at 11.00am.

On a motion by Redlin, seconded by Strouse, the meeting was adjourned at 12:07pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel Burniston
Library Director